ESC SAFETY CONSULTANTS
TOOLBOX SAFETY TRAINING

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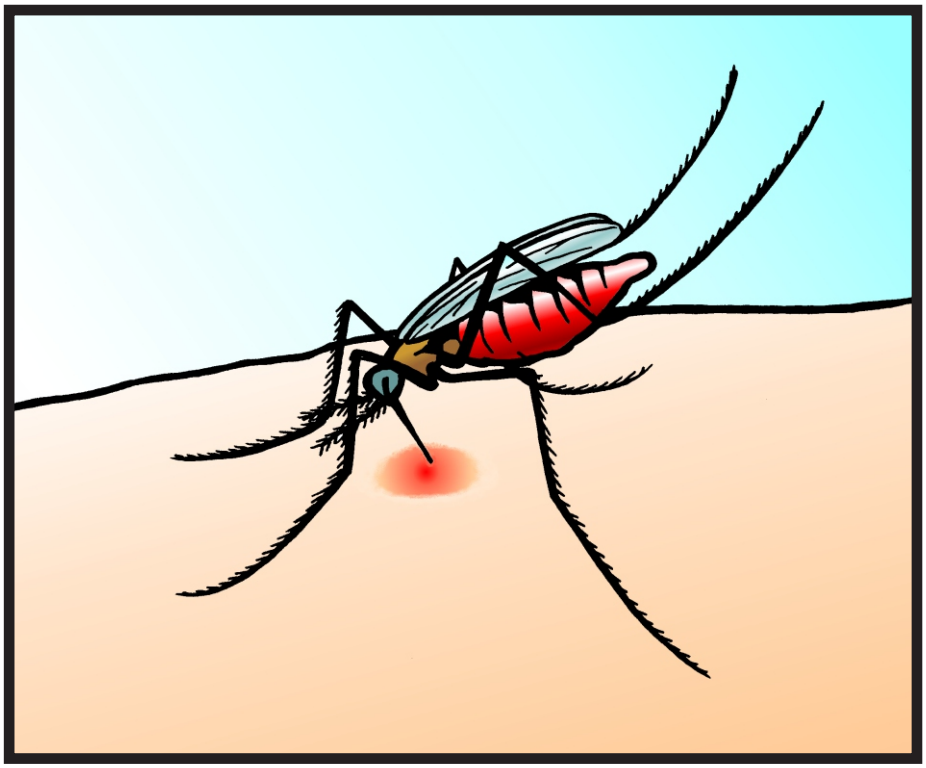
Vol 29 - No 38

MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASES



While the COVID-19 pandemic has captured the attention of the world's leading infectious disease experts, the scientific community has continued to track the transmission of mosquito-borne diseases, including West Nile, Zika, Chikungunya, Dengue, and other dangerous illnesses. As of December 14, 2021, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that more than 2,400 human infections of West Nile occurred in the United States in the past year, of which 165 resulted in death. Nearly every state in the country has been affected, with Arizona, Colorado, California, and Nebraska representing the most cases.

As in years past, West Nile virus (WNv) continues to be the most reported and most deadly mosquito-borne disease in the United States. WNv is carried by over 150 species of mosquitoes, which usually pass the virus to humans after feeding on infected birds.

Approximately 20% of people infected with WNv experience flu-like symptoms such as nausea, headache, muscle pain, fever, and swollen lymph glands. These symptoms may also be accompanied by rashes, sleepiness, disorientation, and stiff neck. Among those infected, less than 1% will go on to develop West Nile Encephalitis or Meningitis. This can result in tremors, convulsions, paralysis, coma, and even death.

Health officials believe the mild winter, early spring and very hot summer have fostered breeding of the mosquitoes that spread the virus to people. Most West Nile infections are reported in August and September, so it's not clear how bad this year will be. But it doesn't look good. As of August 2022, 98 cases of West Nile have been reported with 6 deaths occurring in the United States. On rare occasions, infections can be severe and sometimes an illness known as encephalitis, an inflammation of the brain, can occur. The risk of severe illness and death is highest for people over 50 years old.

West Nile Virus can affect more than 130 species of birds and is carried in at least 36 types of mosquitoes. The infection was found in dogs, rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks and horses nationwide.

Safety Tips:

1. Wear long sleeves and long pants. Loose clothing is better than tight.
2. Use repellents with 30% DEET. They last as long as 10-12 hours. Spray DEET repellent directly onto your clothes. Do not apply repellent to cuts, wounds or irritated skin.
3. Empty standing water from old tires, barrels, buckets, or other containers.

WEST NILE VIRUS

YEAR	TOTAL CASES	DEATHS
1999	62	7
2000	21	2
2001	66	10
2002	4,156	284
2003	9,862	264
2004	2,539	100
2005	3,000	119
2006	4,269	177
2007	3,630	124
2008	1,356	44
2009	720	32
2010	1,021	57
2011	712	43
2012	5,674	286
2013	2,469	119
2014	2,205	97
2015	2,175	146
2016	2,149	106
2017	2,097	146
2018	2,647	167
2019	971	60
2020	731	66
2021	2,400	165
TOTAL	2,532	2,456

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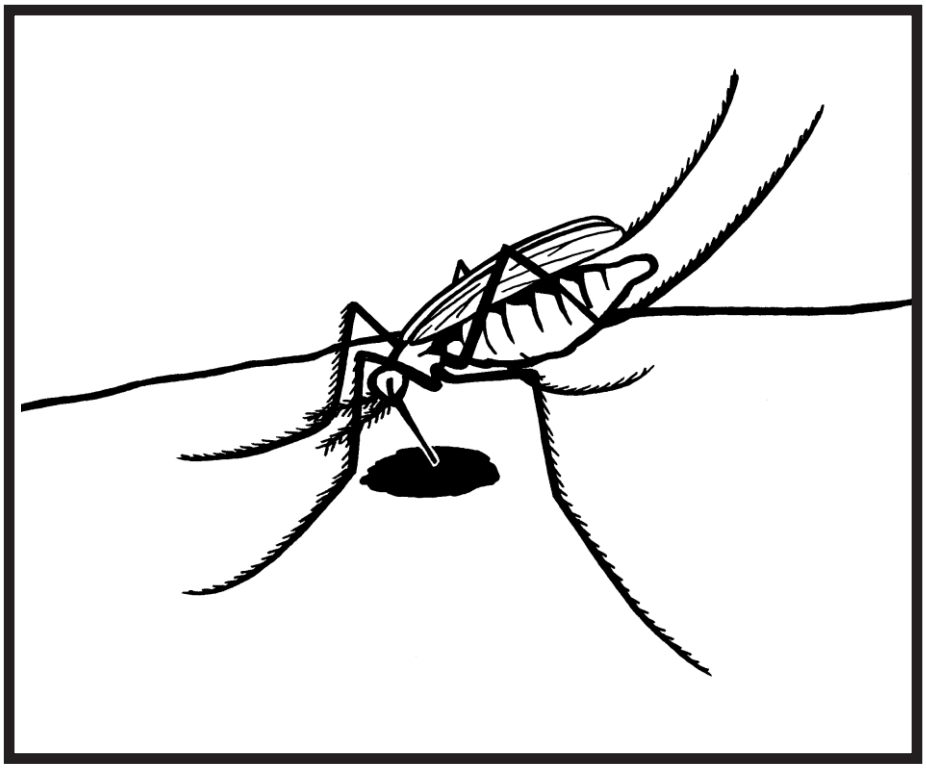

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